

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 210

By Herron

A RESOLUTION to honor Mr. Billy J. Portis for his extraordinary contributions to Carroll County and the state of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee General Assembly is pleased to specially recognize, honor and commend the distinguished citizens of our state who have made extraordinary contributions to their communities and our state; and

WHEREAS, Billy J. Portis of Huntingdon was born on November 4, 1915, in Covington, one of eight children of Ella Jones and N.B. Portis; he graduated from Byars Hall High School in Covington, attended the University of Tennessee Junior College at Martin and was a member of the school's undefeated football team, and graduated in 1940 from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, he married the beloved and wonderful Dorothy Sue Cannon of Greenfield in 1938 and they lived in Decatur County for four years while Mr. Portis served admirably as assistant county agent; and

WHEREAS, the Portises moved to Huntingdon in 1944, and he entered the farm equipment business and remained in that successful business for three decades; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Portis has served ably in numerous governmental offices, including the Huntingdon School Board, which he served expertly as chairman; Huntingdon Board of Aldermen; and as a valued member of the Carroll County Commission for 26 years, through five

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county executives, serving in many ways including as Chairman Pro Tem and on the committee to remodel the courthouse and on the airport board; and

WHEREAS, affectionately known as “Mr. Democrat” in Carroll County, he has been in the forefront of the Democratic Party activity for more than 50 years and was the co-campaign chairman of the Honorable Frank Clement’s Carroll County gubernatorial campaign in 1962, helped elect his friend and neighbor the Honorable Ned R. McWherter, Governor, and played a key role in his son-in-law, the Honorable John Tanner, being elected to the United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, evincing his deep faith, Mr. Portis has long been an active member of Huntingdon’s First United Methodist Church, having served God and the church as a member of their building committee when the church relocated and on many other church committees, including the pastor-parish relations committee and board of stewards; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Portis is an avid quail, dove and duck hunter, having combined his hunting with his politics with such suspects as Agriculture Commissioner Cotton Ivy, Congressional District Representative Joe Hill, numerous County Commissioners and other leaders, including: Dr. Howard Johns, Garvin Renfroe, Ben Thomas Surber, and J. A. Abernathy and other leaders; and

WHEREAS, the Portises produced four exceptionally fine and successful children: Dr. Scott Portis, Betty Ann Portis Tanner, Tom Portis, and Leigh Portis Jones; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Portis has been blessed with ten special grandchildren: Scott Portis, Ben Portis, Rebecca Portis, Andrew Jones, Sara Jones, Caroline Portis, Molly Portis, Taylor Jones, Portis Tanner, and Elizabeth Tanner Atkins, one extraordinary great-granddaughter: Leah Portis, and eagerly awaits the arrival of still more descendants; and

WHEREAS, this long time supporter of Carroll County and its exemplary Chamber of Commerce was recently honored with the prestigious Friend of Carroll County Award, marking only the third time this illustrious award has been given; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we pause to salute not only a true friend of Carroll County but also a true leader in and friend of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and commend the Honorable Billy Portis as a true friend of Tennessee and recognize him as one of Tennessee's very finest citizens.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.